

that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) is bringing to the floor. It is flawed. It does not deal with workers rights, environmental rights, farmer rights; and the upshot of all of this is that we will give away much of our authority and power in the United States House of Representatives and in the other body to deal fairly and adequately and substantively with trade laws that will affect not only those areas, labor, environment, agriculture, but a whole host of other areas that affect the American public.

I ask my colleagues to stand with us as we fight this ill-conceived idea of Fast Track.

OPPOSE FAST TRACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I am indeed new to this body; but I am by no means new to this issue. Prior to the great honor of serving in this body as the elected representative of the 9th Congressional District, I served as an iron worker for 18 years. I worked in the Quincy shipyard just outside of Boston. I worked in the steel mills in Michigan and Illinois, worked in United Auto Workers plants in Framingham, Massachusetts, and again in Michigan.

I have seen a lot of those jobs and a lot of those plants where I worked at one time disappear. I have seen them relocated. Good, highly skilled, well-paying jobs moved mostly to Mexico, but to other countries as well, in a race to find the lowest-paid worker and the least-strong labor standards and environmental standards.

First of all, I want to congratulate the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR), as well as the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) and my own predecessor, John Joseph Moakley from Massachusetts, for their great work in fighting against this so-called Fast Track and also against NAFTA, which has served to really lower the working standards in some foreign countries that we are now dealing with as a result of NAFTA and which we seek to expand through this Fast Track legislation.

The proponents of this bill say that this is dearly tied to our fight against terrorism, but that cannot be further from the truth. The truth is, however, that Fast Track would do nothing to address America's security and economic needs in the wake of September 11. It neither rebuilds, nor does it restore the healing that is necessary to occur in this country.

What this does do is create what in effect is a silent auction, and what is being auctioned off here is first of all Congress' responsibility to deal with foreign trade. The United States Con-

stitution says that it requires that Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and it also says that it shall have the power to make all necessary laws proffered for carrying out those powers.

Fast Track changes all that. We give away our rights. We auction off the right to have a lively and open debate and choose instead to allow the U.S. Trade Representative to negotiate these deals in secret. It should be no surprise that this country has not been well served by secret negotiations, and we have proof positive that this is not the way to conduct our trade policy. Look at NAFTA. Look at the recent round of discussions and the latest ministerial pronouncements as a result of the WTO conferences.

There are no guarantees, no enforcement mechanisms for enforcing our labor laws or human rights. There are no mechanisms, no enforcement devices that allow us to enforce safety standards for food and for the environment.

What one does see is great protections for multinational corporations, no protections for American jobs, and this is simply a pattern that we should not follow; we should expand for the sake of following what some describe as free trade, which is not free trade at all, but it is trade that is dictated by unelected bureaucrats who sit in Geneva, Switzerland.

This bill would cut the Congress out of the process. It would eliminate the constitutional obligation that Congress has right now to serve the people.

The American worker should not be forced to compete with auto workers making 67 cents an hour in the maquiladoras just over the Mexican border. The sons and daughters of America should not be forced to compete with slave labor, which Fast Track would allow. The sons and daughters of America, our workers, should not have to compete with child labor, which Fast Track allows.

Tonight, as we have our armed services personnel, our proud sons, fighting on the ground in Afghanistan to restore and to preserve peace at home, we are seeing through this Fast Track legislation the derogation of the very powers that they seek to protect. I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing this Fast Track.

Now, this body stands to turn its back again on the American working men and women by engaging in this Fast-Track procedure.

I am new to public service, prior to the privilege of my office now, I was an ironworker for 18 years; I worked at the Quincy shipyard just outside of Boston, Steel Mills in Indiana, and GM plants in Framingham, and in Michigan. I've seen those jobs disappear with thousands of others because companies could exploit low-wage labor through unfair foreign competition. So, as you can see, I am not new to this issue.

The proponents of this bill, the President, Trade Representative Bob Zoellick, and oth-

ers, seek to link Fast Track to our Nation's antiterrorism efforts. At times, claiming that not to support this bill is to be less than patriotic.

The truth is, however, Fast Track would do nothing to address America's security and economic needs in the wake of September 11. Fast Track neither rebuilds, nor does it restore, it does not heal and it will not bring America together. Instead it will work to continue to drive America apart—starting with the denial of an open and honest debate on this very floor.

The United States Constitution says Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations; and it shall have the power to make all necessary laws proper for carrying out those powers.

Fast Track is a procedural rule that would obligate us to resign our responsibilities on behalf of our constituents. It makes us give up our rights and responsibilities to the people who sent us here.

Mr. Speaker, I can without a doubt affirm that my constituents did not send me here to give away their rights or allow their voices to be silenced.

And in silence and secret is exactly how these trade negotiations will be carried out under Fast Track. U.S. Trade Representatives, who are not elected by the people, will be deciding and negotiating in closed-door backroom sessions.

It is a troublesome process we endorse by engaging in this Fast-Track procedure and we do not have to look far to see the example of failure in that process. We can look to NAFTA.

We see it in the fact that there are no enforceable labor and environmental standards in NAFTA or in the proposed expansion of NAFTA to 34 other countries under the Free Trade Area of the Americas Act.

While the bill raises the issue of labor standards and raises the issue of environmental protections, enforcement of these issues is recklessly absent.

It is easy to see, Mr. Speaker, exactly who benefits from an extension of NAFTA just by examining the juxtaposition of enforceable worker and environmental rights with the rights of investors.

Most troublesome are the protections that allow corporations to impose rules on the global economy that effectively mute competing voices and values, while undermining the sovereign capacity of a nation to defend its own citizens' broader interests by overriding established rights in domestic law.

We have seen the United States has lost millions of dollars to corporations who have successfully sued States under NAFTA's Chapter 11 bylaws claiming that government efforts to improve environmental standards impeded company rights. These are cases not decided in Federal court but in a NAFTA tribunal—again—behind closed doors. The State of California stands to lose \$1 billion to the Methanex Company for trying to enforce laws that keep poisonous carcinogens out of gasoline.

In contrast we have seen what NAFTA has done for families, workers and the environment.

The impact of NAFTA on American jobs and worker's rights in member nations is astounding. In the 8 years of its existence, Trade Adjustment Assistance has tallied 800,000 American workers who have lost skilled, well-paid

jobs to import competition under NAFTA, the threat of factory relocations holds down wages for tens of thousands more.

Those who have lost their jobs are working, however—making a fraction of what they used to earn. And their jobs? They're held by workers in Maquiladora earning pennies on the dollar with no breaks, no rights to organize and no laws to keep children in school and out of slave labor. This bill is completely absent of any enforceable standard.

The sons and daughters of America's Great-est Generation should not have to compete with child labor and American workers should not have to compete with slave labor.

The American public should not be faced with the risk posed by the safety hazards and the emissions impacts of the 4 and half million Mexican trucks that travel over the border every year. Not to mention the contents of those trucks.

Less than 2 percent of those trucks—roughly 90,000 are ever inspected. Meaning many enter without the proper safety codes and emissions standards required by all 50 states.

Worse yet, the lack of accountability allows produce and meats to come into this country that do not meet the regulatory standards of the FDA—giving families the unfortunate prospect of not knowing if they're eating off the NAFTA diet.

We have seen examples of that, with the outbreak of Cyclosporiasis in seven States—California, Nevada, Maryland, Nebraska, New York, Rhode Island, and Texas (FDA source)—from the consumption of Guatemalan Raspberries contaminated with parasites. A virus that was allowed into this country because the produce did not undergo the FDA process and the sanitation process that is given to U.S.-grown produce.

It's accountability that is missing from these types of trade agreements. And without it, we are unable to guarantee protections and safeguards for the American worker and the American public.

At issue is not whether America should be part of the global economy but how it should be a part of the global economy. Before riding the fast track to more trade agreements, we ought to address the failures and pitfalls of prior ones.

Putting working families first ought to be a major priority especially in the wake of thousands of lost jobs during this recession. Congress has made bipartisan progress on a whole range of issues since then. What we now need to do is to take advantage of this high spirit of bipartisanship and put America's trade agreements on the right track by preserving Congress's legislative role; require negotiators to install provisions that will promote workers' rights, and require negotiators to develop trade rules that cannot undercut environmental laws.

We must do whatever we can to recapture the accountability entitled to the American people. The first step in doing that is to defeat fast track. I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote down this bill.

COMMEMORATING 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Alliance for Community Media. This is a nonprofit organization which was founded in 1976 to provide access to voices and opinions that otherwise would not be heard. The alliance promotes this idea through public education, progressive legislation, regulatory outreach, coalition building, and grassroots organizing.

The alliance's primary goal is to educate and advocate on behalf of the community at large. It works with the Federal Communication Commission, Congress, State legislatures, State regulatory agencies, and other partners to ensure that all people, regardless of race, gender, disability, religion or economic status, have access to available technology to express their opinions, to express their views.

In my congressional district back in Chicago and in the western suburbs, I use extensively this media to reach out to my constituents. We do a program called Hotline 21, where citizens can call in and voice their opinions and get answers to their questions. That is a 30-minute one. We do another one that is an hour where individuals come in and talk about public issues, public policy directors, notions, concepts and ideas. As a matter of fact, the group of community producers, individuals who have their own shows, who have learned how to use technology, how to use cameras, as a matter of fact, they have built up quite a following; and everybody knows that whatever it is that they want to get out, they can get it out through this media.

So I again commend the Alliance for Community Media, congratulate them on their 25th year anniversary; and I also congratulate their executive director, Bunnie Riedel, and her associates for having done an outstanding job and for having helped to keep alive the notion that as people talk and interact, share notions, ideas and concepts that really binds us closer together as a Nation, it helps to promote the concepts of democracy and it helps to make America a stronger, more open, more productive Nation.

SUPPORTING THE BIPARTISAN TRADE PROMOTION ACT OF 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OTTER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the bipartisan trade promotion Act of 2001 and encourage my colleagues in the House to support its passage when we take that crucial vote this week.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK).

Mr. SCHROCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I come to the floor this evening with a plea for the people of the district I represent. When the House votes Thursday to grant the President Trade Promotion Authority, I urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

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The district I represent sits on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Millions of dollars' worth of goods pass through these waters every day, both from domestic sources and from our trading partners abroad.

The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to four State-owned ports, the Newport News Marine Terminal, the Norfolk International Terminals, the Portsmouth Marine Terminal and the Virginia Inland Port in Warren County, Virginia. At these ports, importers and exporters find an intricate transportation network, bringing maritime commerce together with road and rail transport. This network allows the goods brought into the ports to reach two-thirds of the American population within 24 hours. If a country or foreign company wants to do business with Americans, they will no doubt deal with the ports of Virginia at some point.

For this reason, the upcoming vote on Presidential Trade Promotion Authority is vital to the people of Virginia's Second District and for all Americans. On Thursday, we will consider granting the President Trade Promotion Authority to negotiate new trade agreements with foreign nations. It is the first step in gaining access to foreign markets for our economy and to open doors to other countries for similar access. This measure has a great impact on the residents of the district I represent because we live where the effects of trade are most evident.

When trade increases, more ships and barges come into these ports, packed with containers and creating the need for more people to handle these goods and ensure their safe transport to communities across the country.

Equally important is the impact that the trade has on the rest of the country. Increasing trade by removing trade and investment barriers benefits all Americans in the checkout line, giving them a wider choice of goods at better prices. Thousands of U.S. manufacturing jobs depend on exports, and TPA will open more foreign markets for these products, and American farmers will benefit as more markets open for their goods.

When the lack of free trade agreements makes our wages lower and makes goods cost more, this is a tax.